

tiquity. As early as 1540 Cranmer wrote^{^to^} Oziander protesting against the embarrassment cause^{Xto} reformers in England by the indulgence to moral laxity, in the matter alike of economic transactions" and of marriage, alleged to be given by reformers in Germany."

By the seventeenth century the hints had become a theory and an argument. Bossuet taunted Calvin and Bucer with being the first theologians to defend

extortion,** and it only remained for a pamphleteer

to adapt tEe indictment to popular consumption,

writing bluntly that " it grew to a proverb that

was the brat of heresy/'^{1?} That the revolt

Rome synchronized, both in Germany and in England,

with a period of acute social distress is undeniable,

nor is any long argument needed to show that,

other revolutions, it had its seamy side. What

sometimes suggested, however, is not merely a coin-

cidence of religious and economic movements,

but a logical connection between changes in economic

organization and changes in religious doctrines. It is implied

that the bad social practice of the age was the inevitable

expression of its religious innovations, and that,

if the reformers did not explicitly teach a conscienceless

individualism, individualism was, at least, the

corollary of their teaching. In the eighteenth

century, which had as little love for the commercial

restrictions
of the ages of monkish superstition as for
their political
theory, that view was advanced as
eulogy. In our
own day, the wheel seems almost to have
come full
circle. What was then a matter for
congratulation
is now often an occasion for criticism.
There are
writers by whom the Reformation is
attacked, as
inaugurating a period of unscrupulous
commercialism,
which had previously been held in check, it
is suggested,
by the teaching of the Church.
These attempts to relate changes in social
theory to
the grand religious struggles of the
age have their
significance. But the *obiter dicta* of an
acrimonious